

Point Three

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The monthly magazine of TOC H



Point Three

Editor: Colin Rudd

Editorial Assistant: Barbara Martin

Designer: Sybil A Chick

Letters, articles and news items are welcomed, and should be addressed to the Toc H Editorial Office, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Bucks HP22 6BT (Telephone: 0296 623911)

Opinions expressed (including the editorial) are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Toc H Movement.

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(Telephone: 0296 623911.)

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Toc H is a Movement of people who seek to build friendships, and offer service, across the barriers that usually divide us from one another. The basic unit is the group — at best a good cross-section of the local neighbourhood — which meets together regularly, and seeks to serve the community around it. Toc H was founded in 1915 by the Rev P B 'Tubby' Clayton, and since then has been providing opportunities for people to test the Christian way by practical experiment.

All members pledge themselves to try:

1. To welcome all in friendship and lessen by habit of thought, word and deed the prejudices which separate people.
2. To give personal service.
3. To find their own convictions while listening with respect to the views of others.
4. To acknowledge the spiritual nature of man and to test the Christian way by trying it.

This magazine is a forum for ideas about Toc H and about the world as well as a record of Toc H service. Its title derives from the third of these Four Points.

Cover picture;
The Cross at Taizé,

Photo: Judi Edwards

Editorial

It's a small world

Modern technology, when applied to communications, has had a curious effect on our perception of time and distance. We can now hear and see things 'as they happen' from almost anywhere in the world without ever needing to leave the comfort of our own home. The quality of television and sound broadcasting and reception is now so high that America could be in the next room, and South Africa in the next street. The world, we say, has got smaller. Of course, in a literal sense, that's nonsense, but it is a good way to describe this still new sensation of living cheek-by-jowl with those who, until a short time ago, might as well have been light years away. It is hard to realise the full extent to which this one change has affected our life and our perception of our world. It has come upon us so quickly that, for most of us, our thinking has not yet caught up with the new dimensions with which we are being challenged. Now no nation can act in isolation, or even in secrecy. What is done in Wall Street has an almost instant effect in London, Paris, Tokio; the consequences of Japanese industrial production are all around us in England; Australian law has its impact on our security services, and, through television, the destitute on the other side of the world live in all our homes. Whoever first coined the phrase 'the global village' was expressing in a word picture our sense of living in a smaller world.

How often, though, we find ourselves actually living as though nothing had changed, as though, somehow, we were still living 100 years ago when events which had taken place elsewhere in the world days, or even weeks, ago could still be news; when nations could act independly, and either not care about, or even not realise, what effects their actions were having elsewhere. In those days Britain could develop its own industrial and commercial base with most people totally unaware that that meant impoverishment for whole populations in Asia and Africa, and the beginning of what we now call the Third World. Isolationism of that sort was not simply popular, it was inevitable. Isolationism of that kind can no longer work, and when the French test a nuclear device on Muraroa Athol all the world knows about it and is conscious of the consequences.

Toc H is not immune from isolationism. While we are rightly concerned to project those unique things which make Toc H what it is we all too frequently use them as an excuse for 'doing our own thing', and not co-operating with other organisations where we can and should. At Central Council we were urged to develop our links with CAWTU (Church Action with the Unemployed — see the article in this issue). We must not allow ourselves to be paralysed by the fear of losing some of our independence of action — which genuine co-operation will mean — but work for those good things which can grow out of our working together.

In *The Link*, the Toc H Journal of Australia, I came across a short piece of writing which expresses the hope in which we need to approach this venture.

CRR

I recently read about the reason migrating geese fly in a V formation. Each goose flapping its wings creates an upward lift for the goose that follows. When all the geese do their part, the whole flock has a 71% greater flying range than if each bird were to fly alone. Also when a goose begins to lag behind, the others 'honk' it into position.

The spiritual applications here are tremendous. I am sure it is at least 71% easier to live the Christian life, 'flying in the flock' than trying to go it alone and it is good to have the advantage of being loved back into position if we stray from our faith.



Fandabadozy Fun Day

Toc H in the West Midlands has recently joined forces with an inner city group in Birmingham - The Sparkbrook Association. This marriage came about after the decision taken at Central Council that Toc H should be more involved in inner city development. The Sparkbrook Association has been involved in community work for 25 years, and the work is now being co-ordinated by the new LTV Tom McNamee. Tom's brief is to promote work already being done in the area and to initiate new ideas and projects in the Centre. As part of the Association's 25 years celebration, Tom organised a 'Fandabadozy Fun Day' which, despite

some staffing problems, was a great success. There were plenty of activities for the kids including an inflatable bouncing castle, an arts and crafts tent which was supplied by the local Territorial Army, cartoons, which were a big attraction and a disco with fun and games like custard pie-in-the-face competitions! The next thing on the agenda for Tom is the 'Toy Fayre Appeal 86'. Because of the deprivation in the area the Association is aiming to collect 1,000 toys so if you can help either by collecting half decent toys or by making a donation to this appeal, Tom will be pleased to hear from you. Telephone 021 449 4668 anytime.



Photos: Tim Beckett

Forthcoming Events

February

- 6- 8 Your Patient Our Friend, Alison House
- 14 North Wales & North West REC

March

- 1 Unemployment Sunday
- 7 Colsterdale Dance, British Legion Rooms, Huddersfield
- 12 South Eastern REC
- 13-15 Project No 1 Last Chance at Lecky Lake
- 13-15 Interfaith Weekend, Cuddesdon
- 14 South Western Regional Council
- 20-22 Project No 2 Conservation Weekend
- 27-29 Project No 3 Come to Cuddesdon
- 27-29 Gardening Weekend, Cuddesdon

April

- 1- 3 Project 4 Gardening Gala
- 10-12 Project No 5 Weekend away for Residents of Shenley Hospital
- 16-19 Easter at Alison House
- 18-25 Project No 6 Last Chance at Lecky Lake
- 20-25 Holiday at Lindridge House
- 24-26 Project No 7 Madness at Mundesley
- 25 North Wales & North West Regional Council
- 25 Southern Regional Council
- 25- Project No 8 Conservation with a difference
- 5 May

Welcome

The following new members were registered during December:

David S West (Beds & North Herts District), Mrs Dorothy Evans, Mrs Ida L Fisher, Mrs Violet Hewitt, William J Weir, (Bideford J), Mrs June Passingham (Bitterne W), Rev Malcolm J Cook (Broadstairs J), Robert J Cole (Central), Mrs Doreen Finlay (Gorleston & Great Yarmouth J), Mrs Nancy Bourlet (Lymington J), Miss Rachael Barton, Miss Victoria Burton, Martin K Dolby, David J Durston, Jonathan Martin, Miss Sarah Martin, Miss Diane E Perkins (Melton Mowbray M-Magpies J Grp), Mrs Irene Brewin, Ralph Dickman (Melton & Charnwood District), Mrs Brenda Kay (Rochdale W), Timothy Chapman (Stockport District), Mrs Annie G Cannon, Mrs Annie M Jones (Treforest W) Ms Trudie Charles, Michael Tierney (Tower Hill J), Mrs Eileen E Brown (Whetstone & Finchley J), Mrs Brenda Cookson, Mrs Joan Greenhalgh (Winsford J).

A warm welcome to 28 new members

Round and about

A good day out

West Central Branch (W) together with Ray Coleiro (a former Marksman of Mark XI Leicester) and drivers from Camden took a party of 24 from our Toc H Club for the Handicapped in Camden to the gathering organised by Beds and Herts in the Hertford Castle Hall Centre. It was a great day and everyone enjoyed it, especially being able to go in and out of shops and the market (a very rare event for our friends). I took Helen (the one holding the Toc H carrier bag) into St Andrews Church where we found a kneeler embroidered with the Toc H lamp.

Beds and Herts should be congratulated on a very fine, well-organised day. The tables had beautiful settings, the food was good and attractively served AND – sheer joy to our members, unlimited cups of tea.

Not a washout!

The South Staffs and Wulfrun District camp for underprivileged children was a success again this summer – in spite of the weather. The first week was for 27 boys' aged from 6-12, and the second for 30 girls. Both weeks began in warm sunshine, which quickly broke up into wet and windy weather – well, they obviously had two good days! Undaunted by a somewhat capricious mother nature the gallant volunteers took the children on trips – and even took them on a whole day's walk around a Forest Track. They're hoping for more waterproof clothing for next year – as someone said, 'You have to learn to live with your own weather!'

A Community in Leicester

The Leicester Community House is open! That nail biting time of wondering whether it will ever happen is finally over, and in October, with proper ceremony, the house was opened. The Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire, Col Andrew Martin, Brian Blade, the Hon Regional Padre, and the residents of the house – Wendy Huckstep, Pauline Cooper, Neville Wilkinson, David Brougham, Simon Cottingham and Debbie Daynes – joined in a service of dedication at St Peter's Church, Leicester.

A number of groups from the surrounding community already use the house as their meeting place – and no doubt it will go on getting busier, and busier, and busier...

A real Toc H evening

'A real Toc H evening' was how one visitor described our 50th anniversary on 11 November. Padre Harris conducted and arranged the simple service which consisted of hymns, and passages of scripture read by members of the Branch. The service ended with Reg Robertson (a member for nearly 50 years) taking Light. The cake was cut by Robert (89 years young), after which refreshments were served. We were joined by Mary Edwards, Alice Welford and members of Exeter Mens' Branch says Viv Spray of St Thomas Branch, Exeter.

A Newark Street outing

Twenty first September was a sunny day when about 40 senior citizens and their helpers from the Newark Sunday Club, London, visited Worthing. In the afternoon an excellent tea was provided by the members of Broadwater Branch at the Guide Hall. Mabel Buckley entertained them on the piano with old time songs, and everyone joined in. The party dispersed at 4.30pm for the homeward journey with many thanks for a lovely tea and a most enjoyable afternoon.

The Magpies are coming!

The Melton Mowbray Magpies – or, more properly, the M'Magpies – have had a good year, says Vicky Burton. To begin with, they have more than quadrupled their membership! Their first event was a 24 hour Sponsored Trivial Pursuit, so if there's anything you want to know about anything, ask a M'Magpie! This was

Cuddesdon House

Plans for repairs, redecorating and gardening are once again taking shape, so watch the Project Booklet and this space for news of weekend working parties. To begin with:

27-29 March – Gardening Weekend

Please apply to Anne Evans at Cuddesdon House.

15-22 August – Holiday Week

Would you like to make Cuddesdon House your base for a holiday in August? Oxford, Henley, Windsor and London are all in easy reach. We can offer guests Bed, Breakfast and Evening Meal, with reductions for children staying in family rooms.

We also have some spare nights throughout the year for those needing Bed and Breakfast. Please enquire not later than two weeks before you would like to come.

For further information, please contact Anne Evans at Cuddesdon House, Cuddesdon, Oxford OX9 9HB. Tel: 08677 (Wheatley) 2004.

quickly followed by a Christmas Play, and joining with local branches to go Carol Singing.

Then came the decision to run a Project in the summer – take 12 children on holiday to Mundesley. Planning and fund raising filled their time as only planning and fundraising can! The project report makes it plain that all that work had been thoroughly worthwhile. Says Vicky Burton 'It was certainly an experience!'



Six Questions

A Challenge from the Director

At Central Council in November Councillors gave their strong backing to a Resolution which outlines a major emphasis for the next five years. That emphasis was on the urgent need to transmit Toc H to the new generation, by devoting resources to the development of Toc H Projects, in their widest sense. Last month's Point Three carried a report of Council and that decision, and already concrete steps have been taken to put it into practice. It was a policy borne out of the need young people have for what Toc H has to offer and at the same time our own clear need of younger people to maintain the Movement and transmit it further.

It is indeed right that we continue and develop this effort. Yet with all such undertakings there is a danger of being so preoccupied with the transmission of the message that we sometimes forget exactly what the message is. In other words, to echo the earliest Objectives of Toc H, we must not only 'transmit the Spirit' to new generations, but we must also take care to 'maintain it'. But what does that mean?

In the past the Movement had a rather daunting system for the maintenance of standards, and to ensure that the basic ingredients that go to make a real Toc H expression were present. A pattern of committees called 'The Central Guard of the Lamp' and numerous 'Area Guards of the Lamp' existed through which Toc H Branches were supervised, challenged, restrained, admonished and generally kept up to par. While sometimes appearing over-restrictive and cautious, their existence was a clear statement that there were standards in Toc H, and that they mattered. It was a process of 'appraisal from above' and branches had to 'pass' to remain in existence. Similarly, each individual member was only allowed to remain in membership if his or her Branch Executive judged them 'in good standing' at an annual review.

The 1960s brought many changes to British society. The 'permissive society' swept in, and Toc H was not immune to it. I am not just thinking of the first mixed-sex projects (much as I enjoyed them) or optional versions of Toc H ceremonies, or the integration of Toc H and the Toc H Women's Association. It also saw changes of attitudes about membership and branch standards.

Instead of the old pattern of members being judged as to whether they were 'in good standing', the onus moved to the individual member to state whether or not he or she wished to remain in membership. Equally, the close of a branch became increasingly a decision by the branch, and much less a decision 'from above'. The 'Guards of the Lamp' were abolished as they were seen to represent a removal of responsibility from the people on the ground who ought to be responsible. In fact, in Toc H as in the wider society, the whole idea of imposed standards became unacceptable, and the challenge was put to members, and branches, to accept responsibility for their own commitment and their own standards. The theory was that 'self appraisal' should replace 'appraisal from above' and that seems eminently healthy and right in a Movement which talks about 'personal growth'.

obsessed and neurotic, just as any unit that never does it will never notice that it is drifting away from the basic ingredients of Toc H. It needs to be structured, so it isn't just a vague chat about standards, but a disciplined approach to reviewing the life and health of the unit. It isn't easy, but then, to quote Tubby yet again (and from a different context) 'Ease is no indication of God's Will'.

To those branches and other new expressions of Toc H who do it already, and have a regular review, congratulations. To those who are lucky enough to have a brave Pilot who makes sure in happens, well done. To those, however, who find it difficult and to those units which have never even thought of doing it, I offer the following suggestion:

Why not devote one full meeting every six months, or at least once a year, to

IS THERE REAL MEETING TAKING PLACE BETWEEN PEOPLE WHO WOULD NOT OTHERWISE BE MEETING?

ARE PEOPLE BEING INVOLVED IN PERSONAL SERVICE TO OTHERS?

ARE PEOPLE BEING CHALLENGED TO THINK HONESTLY AND FAIRLY ABOUT THEIR OPINIONS, AND ESPECIALLY ABOUT THE PREJUDICES WHICH COLOUR JUDGMENT?

ARE ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE MADE EQUALLY WELCOME IN A FELLOWSHIP IN WHICH THE IMPORTANCE OF EACH INDIVIDUAL IS AFFIRMED?

ARE PEOPLE BEING CHALLENGED TO EXPLORE THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION OF LIFE, AND ESPECIALLY THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION OF THE SERVICE THEY GIVE AND THE RELATIONSHIPS THEY EXPLORE IN TOC H?

DO AT LEAST SOME OF THOSE PEOPLE WITH WHOM TOC H WORKS COME TO ACCEPT SOME RESPONSIBILITY FOR PASSING IT ON TO OTHERS, AND ARE THEY CHALLENGED TO EXPRESS THAT BY BECOMING MEMBERS OF TOC H?

It was of course a risk. It always feels more comfortable to have imposed standards coming from some sort of authority figure. It is uncomfortable to be challenged to consider one's own standards. The challenge of self-appraisal is always a risk, but a risk that can lead to much greater maturity if it is taken seriously. It can also, of course, lead to a quick decline of standards if it is seen as a soft option. Both have happened. There is evidence of individuals, and branches, that have grown in the challenge, but there is also evidence of others that seem to have forgotten that there are standards, and who find self-appraisal an effort they would sooner not make.

Self-appraisal is not easy. It demands honesty and time and effort. It is always much easier to hoodwink a visiting 'inspector' than to hoodwink oneself, or one's fellow members in a Toc H unit. It needs to be done enough, but not too much. Any unit that spends too much time in self-analysis will become self-

giving honest answers to the six questions that appear in the centre of this article? I am not suggesting you seek a 'score' or set a 'passmark'. It is not an exam to be passed. I am not suggesting a group should pack up if they get few Yes answers, or be complacent if they get many. I am just suggesting that these six questions are pointers towards the basic ingredients that go to make a Toc H unit, and for me that includes branches, youth projects, Friendship Circles, Toc H in BAOR and all other expressions of Toc H. They are a chance to take bearings and to remind ourselves on a regular basis of what we should be seeking. That still leaves plenty of time in the year to get out and transmit the Spirit, as indeed we must, and that Spirit will be the better and stronger if time is set aside for reflection and honest self-appraisal. It can lead to real growth for the individual, and for the unit, and if we are not growing, what have we to offer the newcomer? I commend them to you.

A PERSONAL VIEW

This is my story

Jabal Muhammad Buaben

Jabal Muhammad Buaben is an African — from Ghana — so his outlook on Islam is in some ways different from that of Asian Muslims. He is married, and his wife and children have remained in Ghana while he has come to study at The Centre for the Study of Islam and Muslim — Christian Relations at Selly Oak Colleges in Birmingham.

I was born to a small unimportant Muslim couple in Ghana and was named Muhammad Buaben. Probably my parents thought that I would be able to emulate the secular personality of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). This Muhammad (Peace be upon him) is the Prophet of Islam who the holy Qur'an (33:21) says is the best model for humankind. I do not know whether I have been able in any way to achieve a small measure of this remarkable personality. I am still struggling.

There is an interesting story about my name which I usually tell and I would like to repeat it here. When the time came for me to enter the primary school to begin climbing the ladder of Western education, the headteachers who professed a faith different from my parents' decided that the 'Muhammad' was inappropriate for the school register. Even though the school was controlled by the Central Government and hence officially not under the sway of any particular faith, the local situation was such that it was unofficially under the Church, and a particular Protestant Church at that. Thanks be to God the conditions have dramatically changed and it is very rare for such things to happen now. Those were the days when we had Headteacher — Catechists all over the place. I could not argue then and my father did not seem to have the pluck to stand up to the Headteacher (a master!). I was therefore 'awarded' the name 'James' without any effort on my part, and was subtly taught to forget my Muslim name.

It was later when I was in the Senior Classes, and later still in the Secondary school, that I realised there was something in a name and hence recalled my 'Muhammad'. In my traditional African society, names are not mere labels. The name speaks about, teaches and directs the carrier. My Muslim name works in that way for me.

I had, however, used the initial 'J' so much that I decided to look for a Muslim name beginning with 'J'. I then heard the story of Muadh Ibn Jabal (may Allah be pleased with him) who was appointed as Governor of Yemen during the time of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). I just seemed to like the 'Jabal' in his name and that is how I came by my full name, Jabal Muhammad Buaben. If I look through some of my old school books and see James Buaben later becoming James Muhammad Buaben and then finally (hopefully) Jabal Muhammad Buaben, I marvel at the wonderful metamorphosis!

Throughout this process, one characteristic I have been able to keep intact is my faith — Islam, and I thank God for that. The changes I have gone through have strengthened my faith rather than weakened it. I have even grown to find that any faith different from mine is not merely another faith but a critique of mine — the one I profess. The Holy Qur'an recognises earlier revealed Scripture. Other religions therefore contain truths which are relevant to Islam as well. When I look at how other religious people appreciate God and live their lives I am able to re-examine my own Islamic teachings and how to follow them better. The nature of God Himself makes different forms of apprehension logical. Other forms of apprehension hence teach me more and enable me to become firmer in Islam. That is why I call the other faith a critique of mine. It is sometimes said, *Thy neighbour's life is a looking glass for myself*. It is when we look the other person closely in the eyes that we see our own true self reflected there!

My African situation where three dominant faiths — African Traditional Religions, Christianity and Islam — survive had taught me a lot about how people of faith need to understand and co-operate with each other to serve the purpose of creation. In the Holy Qur'an, Allah says He created humankind as the vicegerent (Khalifa) on earth (2:30; 6:165). Again we are reminded that creation was primarily for the purpose of worshipping Allah, the creator (51:56).

The Holy Qur'an is full of examples of how Muslims should endeavour to understand each other and live in peace with people of faith. The life of prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) contains several examples of the need for understanding, co-operation and peaceful co-existence. Several other instances are

to be found in the Holy Qur'an. Those familiar with the life of Muhammad (Peace be upon him) will remember the stories of Bahira and Waraqa Ibn Naufal who were known to be learned people in the scripture, and also the emigration (Hijrah) undertaken by some of the persecuted Muslims to Abyssinia — a Christian country under the rule of the Negus.

Then we read about the famous document usually called 'The Constitution of Madina'. Here, details of how the various groups in Madina, including the three main Jewish tribes, were to conduct themselves and protect the city against the might of the idolatrous Makkans are given.

The other examples we can call to mind are the christian delegation from Najran which visited Muhammad (Peace be upon him) in Madina and the emissaries he sent to various rulers including those of Byzantium, Egypt and Abyssinia.

All these teach me as a Muslim the great lesson that people of faith have to come together to fight the ever growing consumerism, irreligion, secularism and anti-God philosophies that are enveloping our world. We should endeavour to shed inhuman and unethical ideologies and the pure egoistic tendencies in us. The sometimes aggressive, dominating interpretation of dogma and other traditional values and concepts need to be reassessed if we are to catch the perfect attention of our listeners. From what I referred to earlier about creation of humankind in the Holy Qur'an, it is implicit that we are mere trustees of the earth and hence will be held responsible by the One who made us vicegerents of it if we fail to preserve the earth and shape human existence with dignity.

Since my coming to Britain as a student, I have had a lot of opportunities to widen my horizon on Inter-Faith relations and understanding. The centre where I have most of my studies is by its very name and nature devoted to such concern. This is the 'Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations' in Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham. It was from here that in the Autumn of 1984, I had the honour of being invited to the Annual Conference of the World Congress of Faiths held at Chichester. I had an amazing time there, met a lot of people from various faiths and learned so much that I have ever since been grateful to the organisers. I am now a member. From that Conference, I was invited to two

other places in London and Warrington to share views with people of other faiths and, may Allah's name be praised, all these have been wonderful moments for me. Again, in two successive years, I have been lucky to attend the Conference of Jews, Christians and Muslims (JCM) held annually in Bendorf, West Germany. The multi-Faith Resource Unit in Birmingham has also invited me a couple of times to share my faith with other people.

I always tell my friends that the most important things I have learned in Britain since my arrival here in Autumn 1983 have not come from books, my thesis or the tutorials with my supervisors but from these meetings. The number of questions I have put to myself and to others, both about my own faith and theirs, and the kind of answers I have received are innumerable. Only God knows the level to which my Muslim faith has been strengthened. My faith has acquired a newer and deeper significance and value while preserving the original essential content.

Back home in Ghana, we have real, empirical, existential Inter-faith relations. It is these which make it possible for the Chief-Imam, the Archbishop, the President of the Methodist Conference, the Prophet or Prophetess of the Spiritual Church and Priest or Priestess of the African Traditional Religions to share the same platform on national festive occasions. During this time prayers — Christian, Muslim and Traditional African — are made to God to protect the land and the people, give us prosperity and guide us aright. This spirit has been

greatly reinforced during my stay here in Britain through the Inter-faith meetings and discussions.

However, all has not been quite as smooth as the reader may think. The whole technological society of Britain poses a great challenge to me. As Parrinder and Mbiti have said, the African is notoriously and incurably religious. Religion, to an African like myself, is not just a matter for the intellect. It is part of one's whole life. It is not a private affair. It is communal. My experience of Britain is very different and indeed shocking.

It is true to say that '... with the richness of its cultural heritage, Africa has much to teach the rest of the world and particularly those societies where technological revolution has had a dehumanising effect on human enterprise and on man himself'. Despite all our problems of famine, guerilla warfare and coups d'etat (which are unfortunately not very foreign to our land) the world still has a lot to learn from us.

The most powerful instrument I find in Britain is the media. Sometimes if I listen to the news and discussions or watch films on television and read certain articles in the newspapers, certain questions occur to me about man, faith, Islam and God. Personal failures and other problems also occur to me here and I ask similar questions. I then turn to the Holy Qur'an where I am assuredly told that whoever has faith in Allah has got hold of a handle that never gives way (2.256).

Important Admin. Matters

Point Three -Branch Orders

It is time now for Branches to confirm their orders for Point Three for the coming year. This is so that we can ensure that the right quantities are sent from April onwards and also that despatches for the coming year are invoiced correctly. We shall assume that Branches require the current number of copies each month unless we are advised otherwise.

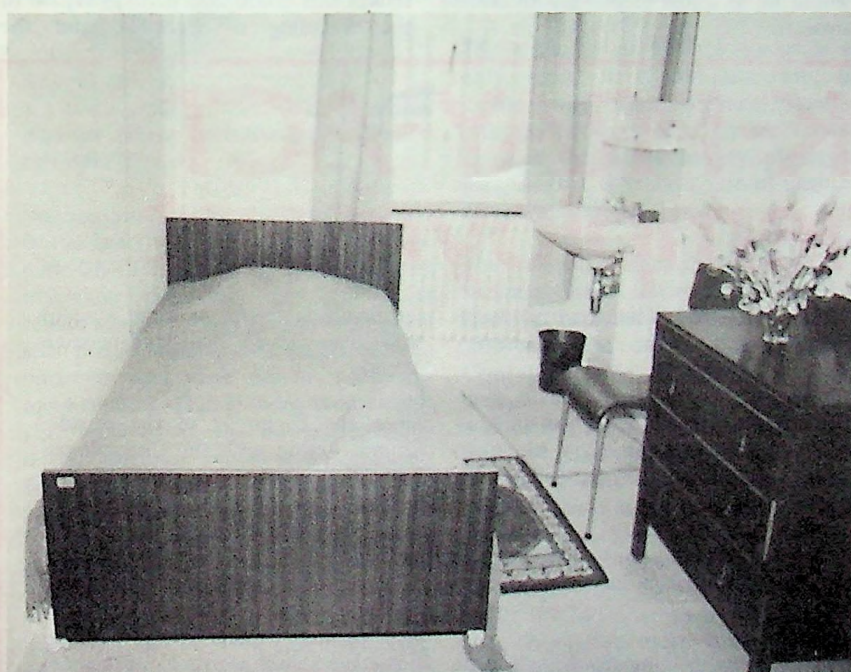
You are reminded that individual copies will cost 20p but an annual subscription will be just £2 from 1 April.

The Chancellor wants to help Toc H as much as you do!

For every £1 covenanted by a taxpayer to Toc H the Chancellor of the Exchequer has agreed to give Toc H a further 41p. Now that we are approaching the end of one tax year and starting another, this is a good time to be opening (or increasing) a covenant in favour of Toc H and test the Chancellor's promise. Ask your Branch Treasurer or Wendover for details — but be quick!

You (or your husband/wife) have to be a taxpayer to gain this 'bonus' to your giving. Even if you do not pay tax directly but receive interest on a Building Society Account we can still claim back tax provided the interest you receive is more than your covenant plus tax recovered.

And now the Chancellor's thought up another idea to help Toc H! As from next April he will allow employees and possibly pensioners to give £120 from their income to any charity of their choice and he will allow it as a deduction for tax purposes, so a gift of £120 to Toc H would cost the giver only £85. Full details of this scheme are still being devised but watch this space for a further announcement.



New beds for Talbot House (see Round & About, January 1987). Please send any donations to Bert Hill, 228 Ben Davies Court, Underhill, Romiley, Stockport, Cheshire SK6 4QP.

UNEMPLOYMENT SU

Church Action with the Unemployed Colin Rudd



A CAWTU workshop in Redcar.

Church Action with the Unemployed — or CAWTU — was founded in 1981. It has created a resource of information and experience which enables 30,000 local churches of all denominations to respond more effectively to the social tragedy of unemployment. The dramatic impact on local communities of major works closures in the mid 1970s deeply concerned many groups of Christians. Among them were the Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism, Industrial Chaplains and the Industrial and Economical Affairs Committee of the Church of England.

They saw the many technological and other changes taking place in industry as the start of a new revolution as fundamental as the Agricultural and Industrial Revolutions. They realised that millions of young people and adults would become unemployed. Especially significant to the Church, many would go on to become long-term unemployed, and then isolated, leading to entirely new social problems. Politics and economics, both of which have played major roles in society's evolution since the last war, would be at a loss to provide immediate answers.

Caring, justice, hope and faith would need to be injected into this situation. People would look to their churches for the spiritual dimension in which to explain the reasons for the collapse of traditional work, and to indicate new ways forward involving changes of attitudes and revision of values.

With such a complex issue, however, local churches would not find it easy to make the appropriate pastoral, social and political responses. But a small central resource and enabling unit, it was foreseen, would spread understanding, good practice and action quickly and effectively.

For innovation of this sort, the Church, the most decentralised of organisations, relies on some of its members to recognise a new need, assess their ability to commit themselves to a response and seize the opportunity to act. This contrasts with government and industry where new development is more often initiated, resourced and directed from the centre.

It was this vision which, in 1981, led to the founding of CAWTU, and the

THINK-PRAY-ACT on Unemployment

Taking effective action on an issue as large and complex as unemployment can seem an impossible task. Even to think or pray about it is pretty mind boggling. Yet polls are showing that Christians and others see long-term unemployment as the greatest social evil in our country today.

However, individual people and their immediate groups can begin to get to grips with the challenge of responding. The issues are complex and the scale is vast, but local efforts all over the country are making a vital difference to thousands of lives.

There is a need for changes in attitudes and policies, for large schemes, soundly financed.

But there is also a need for ordinary people to understand the issues, to understand their unemployed friends and neighbours. We can all begin here.

We can all begin with prayer, listening to God, and getting informed through reading.

Later steps can include bringing the issues to the notice of a neighbourhood, a Council, MPs and MEPs, or

setting up a project of some kind to help unemployed men and women directly.

Since the beginning of the decade, Church Action with the Unemployed has challenged, encouraged and enabled local churches to respond to long-term unemployment.

A background pack of materials is available from CAWTU (price £1), as well as free leaflets giving practical first-stage help in working out schemes and projects of various kinds.

DO SOMETHING!

- * Use CAWTU materials, those from another source, or write your own, to include a focus on work and unemployment in your main Sunday service.
- * Hold a special service.
- * Get together with other churches and hold an evening or all-night vigil in a public place (Friday or Saturday night?) to call attention to unemployment.
- * Take a collection/give your collection on Unemployment Sunday to CAWTU or to a local Unemployment Project – it will be used to great effect.
- * Run a workshop on the Saturday or Sunday afternoon.
- * Give out stickers to passers-by in your shopping precinct on the Saturday.
- * Invite someone with experience of long-term unemployment, or your local industrial chaplain, or a local councillor, or your MP, to
 - preach
 - talk with an after-church meeting
 - address a Council of Churches meeting, a town or city-wide regular denominational meeting (eg deanery synod in the C of E)
 - talk to your Branch or Group
- * Put it on the agenda of your own church council meeting, meeting of elders, clergy, ministers, other church leadership gathering.
- * Run a series of Bible studies (you could look at a book like Amos, or take passages from various parts of the Bible – CAWTU has a leaflet to help).
- * Commit yourselves to prayer for individuals or the wider issues.
- * Commit yourselves as a Branch to find our more:
 - Send for CAWTU literature
 - Send for a CAWTU Reading List
 - Visit your Library, Jobcentre etc
- * Put on a budget lunch for employed and unemployed on the Monday following Unemployment Sunday.
- * Make sure unemployment is covered in your youth groups – in both teaching and free discussion.
- * Review what is being done for those who are unemployed or fear unemployment, such as school leavers.
- * After making a start, see if you have the facilities to extend that care to others in your neighbourhood.



Norman Oliver, the Executive Director of CAWTU.

organisation has been developing steadily in the last five years. As with Toc H, so with CAWTU, efforts to consolidate are overtaken constantly by still more requirements to change! Growing local and public awareness about long-term unemployment gives rise to many new opportunities. This growing awareness is also reflected in the media, especially radio, television and church magazines, and they all have excellent lines of communication to church members. The need for co-operation grows, and yields substantial benefits – which, in their turn, give rise to new challenges.

No policy can be fixed and unchanging, and change on the part of any major agency in the field of unemployment – for example, the Manpower Services Commission – can, and often does,

involve a change for CAWTU's role as well. It is important that CAWTU should both keep pace with change and at the same time retain its special relevance to local church perspectives.

The challenge of unemployment is not only great, it is complex, too, and interacts with many traditional values and attitudes in life. It can only be overcome by each section of society playing its part, so that CAWTU's rate of change is often dictated by others.

The Executive Director of CAWTU is Norman Oliver. Both his name and his face will be familiar to those who were able to be at either of our last two Central Councils, for he was present at both of them. One of CAWTU's aims is to seek relevant organisations with which it feels it can co-operate especially closely. Toc H, with its wide network of people of all ages, and its own deep concern about the issues raised by unemployment, is already finding that links with CAWTU are valuable, and Central Council in 1986 made it clear that each Region should seek to explore those links and extend them further. The Resolution about liaison with CAWTU *requests each Region to organise a Toc H/CAWTU consultation during 1987 on the state of*

local Christian based responses to unemployment, including the involvement of unemployed volunteers on short-term residential projects, and to report back with proposals for future developments to the Central Executive Committee. It is good that some of our Projects in 1987 have already been arranged well outside university and school holiday times, thus giving more of an opportunity to unemployed people. We should do all that we can to enable them to know about those projects and to join them.

Whether you have such a project or not, though, and even if you have no plans for 'consultations', Unemployment Sunday could provide a basis to stimulate interest and involvement. One thing is clear – unemployment is not something which happens 'somewhere else'! Every community is affected by it, and every Toc H Branch or Group will already have at least some experience of it in its community whatever its size or location. Our growing links with CAWTU can only mean that we are better equipped to act.

If you would like to know more about the services which CAWTU offers, please write to: CAWTU, 318 St Paul's Road, London N1 2LF. Tel: 01-359-8403.

'In Focus'

Cuddesdon House is the subject of 'IN FOCUS' this month. Unlike Alison House, Cuddesdon is entirely owned by Toc H, and is therefore ours to use to the full, or dispose of as we wish. Which will we do?

Cuddesdon House

Set just below the crown of an Oxfordshire hill, entirely surrounded by woods and farmland, nestles the village of Cuddesdon. On the other side of that hill is the huge industrial complex of Cowley which sits on the edge of Oxford itself – a city better known for its University and its churches than for its car factory, but both of great importance to its life. From Cuddesdon that closeness to Oxford can be either enjoyed, or ignored with equal ease.

Cuddesdon itself is notable for at least three things: its ancient Norman church, its anglican theological college, and Cuddesdon House, our own Toc H Centre. It's now seven years since we first moved in there, and in that time a great many people have come through the door, either as members of Toc H, or of one of the many other organisations who enjoy what we have to offer there.

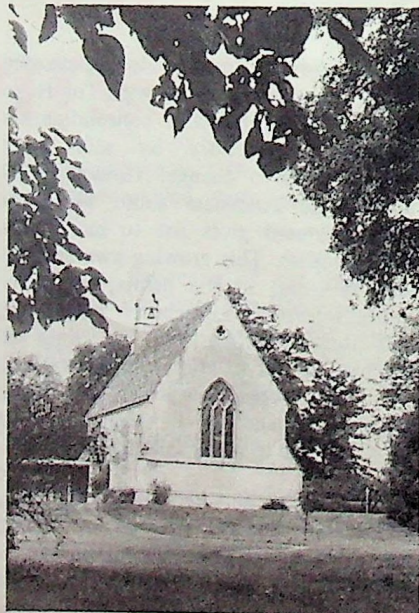
From the outset, the house held a number of attractions for us. Not least was the need to find a house where we could continue with the programme which had been built up over the years at Dor Knap. Those of us who remember Dor Knap have some very warm memories of it (and, if you ever went in the winter, some pretty chilly ones, too!), and leaving it was painful. Much time, skill, love and sheer hard labour had gone into the building of Dor Knap, and saying goodbye both to it and to the glorious countryside in which it was set came hard. However, at the time we were left with no option but to leave, and one of the first questions must have been, 'Which way do we go? Do we go back 20 years and try and find again a place which we could physically build ourselves, or should we try and move forwards into what could be a new phase of development?' In fact, the answer was

clear from the start – going back is rarely wise. It so often represents a desire to return to the securities of childhood, which, of course, are securities no longer, and a reluctance to move on to the next stage of life, whatever that might be. Toc H sought to move on, rather than back.

The house at Cuddesdon was not ideal in every respect, but it had – and has – a number of very attractive features. First among these is that it lies in a community, thus making life much less difficult for wardens and their families – remoteness is lovely to visit, but can be very hard to live with! Its grounds are spacious, and the surrounding countryside has a quiet beauty. The house also had a chapel – semi derelict, biting cold and not easy to use, it nevertheless offered many opportunities for development. Toc H had recently renewed its commitment to the churches' ministry through the Tubby Clayton Fund, so the presence of a Theological College also weighed in Cuddesdon's favour. If there were any problems they concerned the house itself, but as we were to own it, they were not thought to be insuperable. For the rest, it was close to Oxford and, especially compared with Dor Knap, easy to get to. So the pros outweighed the cons, and we bought it.

Since those early days a wide variety of groups and organisations have used the Centre. Branches and Districts have come to engage in many different kinds of programmes, ranging from training, through projects to holiday weeks. Every year sees a number of events organised for the training of project leaders, Central Councillors, LTVs and others from inside Toc H. The house has proved to be an ideal meeting place for members of different communities of faith, and mutual respect and understanding has grown from those events. More will be held during 1987/88 to try and help those who are living with the challenges of a society which contains as wide a spread of belief as ours now does.

The only physical development of Cuddesdon over this period has been the Chapel. Necessary work on the outside of the building was a charge on the Movement, but the money needed to convert the inside was raised entirely by



We will Remember...

We regret to announce the death of the following members:

In April

Norman E Gould (late of Long Eaton)

In December

Mary Breed (Finchley & Whetstone)

Roy S Butters (Burraton)

Alfred J Calderara (Cheltenham)

Ernest G Clarke (Ipswich)

Arthur G McCalla (Purton)

Herbert S G 'Biffer' Smith (Weymouth)

Winifred Ward (Northampton)

R A V 'Roy' Wilton (Durdham Down)

Reg Havercroft, who died earlier last year, had been a member of Potters Bar & Little Heath Branch since 1932. Multiple Sclerosis had forced him to live in a wheelchair for over 20 years, but he remained active in Toc H and Church affairs till the end of his life. For much of his working life he was the manager of the Epworth Press. Reg was a clear thinker and a man of strong views, yet would always listen carefully to opinions different from his own.

Louise Berenger (my sister) died on 12 October 1986 in the Charles Richet Hospital, Villiers-le-Bel, France, after many years of suffering, borne with a patience and courage beyond belief. She had lived and married in Paris, caring for her family, at times with hardship, her husband having died after a short illness at the age of 50. Louise later became a member of Toc H Paris branch, taking part in all branch activities until her illness necessitated hospitalisation. In her last few years she was chairbound. During this time she was regularly visited by the ladies of Toc H branch who made the long journey to the hospital outside Paris. One of the branch jobs is to give a monthly tea to British Senior Citizens living in Paris, and also a Christmas Party at which parcels of groceries are given to all present, and Louise was always remembered in this way. At her funeral service, many of the Toc H branch

members joined the large gathering at St Michael's English Church, Paris, and she will be remembered with love and proud thanksgiving.

HS

'Frank Kirk, of Cosby Branch was well known throughout the Movement' says Alec Dunmore. 'Throughout his long and valued membership he held many offices in the branch, and was most proud of becoming the branch Pilot. Although he was 91 when he died, his interest in Toc H never waned.'

Kitty Giles, aged 94, died on 12 November. Kitty was the wife of 'Gilo' who with others founded St Thomas Branch, and she was, up to fairly recently, an ardent hard worker. She was also a longstanding member of St Thomas Church.

VS

Ipswich Men's Branch has lost a prominent member on the death of Ernest George (Nobby) Clarke. He first met Toc H in Southampton in the early 1930s when he was a resident in Toc H Mark 5. After moving to Ipswich he was a founder member of this Branch, serving it actively for over 50 years until his recent admission to hospital. During that time he was Branch Secretary and an able Jobmaster. He was one of three members who set up a club for local deaf and dumb people in 1935 and which has subsequently become the Mission for the Deaf. In recognition of his work he was made a Vice-President of the Mission.

He has, in many ways, helped the local Saint Raphael Club for the Disabled, contributed to the formation of local international holiday trips for deprived children, the establishment of an Old People's Welfare Club and, with Toc H, started the Hospital Relay Commentary of Ipswich Town football matches. In the field of drama he was a long-standing member of the Ipswich Library Players Drama Group.

He was widely respected and his loss will long be felt, not only by the Branch but by the town.

ERT

It is with sadness we record the death of Joan Bird. Joan joined Toc H in Sevenoaks as a member of LWH, transferring to Southampton when her husband, Harvey, also a member at Sevenoaks came here to work.

Joan was a member of Southampton, then Bitterne Branch, for 40 years, during which time she served as both Branch and District secretary, also as District Councillor. She also worked as secretary to Stuart Greenacre (Greeno) and Inky Bean at Talbot House Seafaring Boys Hostel.

In 1981, Joan became a Builder, acting again as Builders Secretary, although in poor health. She also served her church faithfully, becoming an Elder. Joan showed in her life that she truly believed that 'The service we give is the rent we pay for our room on earth'. We are grateful to have shared her fellowship in Toc H.

MM

The news of the death of Sir Frederick Hoare, head of the old private banking firm of C Hoare and Company recalls the considerable part this General Member played in the Golden Jubilee celebrations of Toc H in May 1965. Although he was no longer Lord Mayor of London at the time of our Jubilee it was very largely through his efforts that the City Corporation, with its history of 2,000 years, played host to a young charity which had its headquarters in the City. No one present on that Monday evening in Guildhall, when the Lord Mayor, assisted by his Sheriffs and the Officers of the Corporation, and attended by stout pikemen in Cromwellian uniform, can forget the pageantry and perfection of courtesy with which our chief guests, the Princess Alexandra and Mr Angus Ogilvy, and all of us, were received. The City spared nothing in the welcome they gave to Toc H members from all parts of the Home country, Poperinge and Toc H around the world. The writer's outstanding memory is the joy the occasion gave to the Founder Padre, with his strong sense of history and tradition, and his devotion to Tower Hill.

GD

We give thanks for their lives

private subscription. In this now beautiful setting there is a regular pattern of worship, and from time to time groups of people come for Quiet Days and Quiet Weekends. Here prayers are offered daily for Toc H and its work.

Another, and an increasingly important, aspect of the life of the Centre is that here many people meet Toc H for the first time, for many outside organisations use the house. Local government, the Health Authority, clergy, teachers and social workers, theological students, Oxfam's international staff, people involved in community education — these and many others are the guests of the Movement for day or residential conferences. It is salutary to realise that such organisations from beyond Toc H make more use of Cuddesdon than does our own membership. Toc H could make far greater use than it does of the

opportunities for outreach which that presents.

1987 is a critical year in the life of Toc H at Cuddesdon. Following a resolution at Central Council (Point Three Jan '87) a working party has been set up to discover ways in which we might make greater use of the Centre. But in the end the final decision about the future of the House will depend in large measure on how much use Toc H makes of it — it's as simple as that. Seven years ago the Central Executive Committee of the day took a courageous step forwards. But courage alone is not enough — imagination and commitment are needed too, and only you can provide those. So come with your ideas, your comments and your criticism, and we shall see Cuddesdon fulfilling the considerable potential which it has for Toc H — after all, it is your Centre!



World Chain of Light

Derek Bartrop

Thursday, 11 November 1986 saw approximately 40 people of all ages gathered at Alison House for the start of the World Chain of Light.

Generally there was an air of excitement and anticipation around the house, mostly generated by the greetings that had been arriving steadily for the last few weeks and days by post, telephone and telegram.

In a short service preceeding the start of the vigil, the Revd Alan Johnson, Staff member in Kent, guided our thoughts in preparation. He spoke of the influence that God has on mankind, and that God has within society, comparing it to the gentle glow of the Lamp of Maintenance. The Message, written by Alan Robson, previous Warden at Alison House, was read by Jim Bush.

At 9 o'clock the Lamp was lit by John Mitchell, Director, and the Vigil had begun.

A stillness began to settle on the house as people began to take their turn at maintaining the Vigil. Throughout the next 24 hours members from a variety of groups and branches, not all of them local, came to participate at Alison House. Here was a sense of unity. As the hours came and went, you knew that now Eastern Canada was joining in, now Australia,

now India, now Zimbabwe. On the first floor a quiet commitment was the order of the day; and downstairs a relaxed sharing around a roaring log fire.

In the last few minutes before 9pm on Friday 12th, Alan Johnson led a short service including readings from Isaiah 60 and Luke 4, 16-21.

Finally Norman Brew, Regional Chairman for the Mid-Eastern Region took Light, and the Lamp was extinguished.

The clock swept on. One by one people departed and we were left wondering at the effect of the Vigil. When could we repeat this experience? What would it be like to do it again? How can we ensure that this unity is maintained?

*'And where there is darkness,
let us bring light.'*

TAIZÉ—a personal reflection

by David Leckie

On 23 August, a group of nine left Newark Street on a week long pilgrimage to Taizé, an ecumenical community in the Burgundy region of France. For many, Taizé was an unknown quantity, an exploration into unfamiliar territory — for me, well this was my fourth trip, yet, as for the others, it was to be a unique experience. This is an attempt to put into words what Taizé is to me . . .

How do you explain Taizé to somebody who has never been? How do you explain any experience which is radically different to the normal, day-to-day, self-centred way we live our lives? As I sit here pen in hand over a blank piece of paper, I realise how difficult it is to describe, in words, what is essentially an 'emotional' experience — never mind, I shall just have to do my best.

One of the first things that hits you upon arrival at Taizé is the simplicity of the

place. Most visitors stay under canvas, either in their own tents or the large 'barracks' though there is limited accommodation in houses in the community for older people, or families with children. Simplicity extends throughout the community, and nowhere is it more obvious than in its focal point, the Church of Reconciliation.

The life of the community revolves around the church, and the three services held each day. There are no pews, you just sit on the floor, and the service itself relies on short Bible readings, prayers, and periods of silence. The 'wordiness' that is characteristic of 'traditional' church services is nowhere to be found, and for many the services at Taizé are a bit of a 'culture shock' at first. Yet you soon become familiar with the style, and, as far as I am concerned, the 'presence' in that church has yet to be equalled. The combination of prayerful silence, and

simple meditative musical chants create an atmosphere which brings me the closest I can ever be to an understanding of my God.

On a more mundane level, the simplicity extends to the food. If any of our party imagined for a moment that they would experience some of the delights of French cuisine, their illusions were quickly shattered! Breakfast consists of a bowl of hot chocolate and some bread, lunch and tea is some kind of 'splurge' with plenty of fruit, cheese and bread. The food is adequate, and serves to illustrate that one can eat healthily, and yet simply — for me it highlights the crassness and immorality of you and I enjoying our Sunday lunches of Roast Beef, Yorkshire Pudding etc while, in another part of the world, people are dying for want of the basic staples of a diet. How much could be achieved if simplicity and sharing became universally accepted principles?



Open Forum

We reserve the right to edit letters. Only letters with full name and address will be considered for publication.

Stand up and be counted

Facing up to the unpleasant facts of life in a positive way is my idea of what practical religion is all about or rather one aspect of it. That is why I am now an enthusiastic anti-nuclear campaigner to the extent of having served a short prison sentence in April 1986 with the aim of challenging the fence sitters. Where most subjects are concerned, there are arguments on both sides, but over this particular issue, as I see it, there is only one. Either the nations, including ours, ally themselves to the policy of the nuclear threat, which will ultimately and inevitably result in mass destruction of life, with Britain top of the list, or strive, here, there and everywhere, to reduce and

eliminate the menace. If other arguments are brought in, they only blur this stark choice.

A letter of mine on this vital, life or death subject was printed in Point Three months ago and elicited no response that I am aware of. There were no letters either pro or anti. Should this happen again, if this letter is printed, I will regard Toc H as being moribund and take appropriate action, eg sever a limb.

Richard Crump
Carshalton

The Main Resolution

On reading the reference in your editorial to the pledge 'to listen now and always to

the voice of God', my mind went back to a day in 1951 when I sat at the feet of our beloved Founder, Tubby.

With some warmth he admonished us always to 'strive to listen now and always for the voice of God' and to avoid such careless phraseology as to 'listen to His voice', repeated without thought of the real significance of the resolution. At some length he expounded that the interchange of these two words lessened the true impact.

'Be on the alert, listening prayerfully for Him to speak to us in His good time' was the gist of Tubby's valuable admonition.

Frank Figg
Luton



What about the daytime activities at Taizé, what do you actually *do* there? Well, on arrival, visitors are asked to participate in one of three different activities. Firstly, and perhaps this is the most challenging option, there is the opportunity to spend the week in silence. The less said about that the better! Secondly, and this is the most popular option, one can join a discussion group and look at a particular theme over the week. These groups are made up of people from many different countries, and it is not uncommon to have to 'appoint' an interpreter in the group as two or more languages will be spoken. Although this is occasionally frustrating, and it slows the conversation down dramatically, it is undoubtedly a positive experience to share with people from other countries and cultures. Taizé is a community dedicated to breaking down barriers, and reconciling people one with the other. Whilst there remain barriers between different nations, the opportunity to come together and share a common experience can only be of positive value. For example, who can deny the value of Taizé for a young man from Northern Ireland with whom I shared the week – that was the first time he, as a Catholic, had worshipped together with Protestants. In small ways, the experience of Taizé is helping to

break down the barriers built on ignorance and mistrust. In our divided world, there *are* glimmers of hope for the future.

The third option, for those wishing it, is to take part in a Work Group in the community. Every visitor *has* to participate practically. For example my group had to wash up after tea, every day, for over 1,000 people (and you thought washing up after Christmas dinner was bad!) but those who join the Work Group spend the whole day helping the community to function, and with many thousands of visitors each year, the role of these volunteers is particularly important. The ethos of the community is such that it refuses to receive gifts from outside – instead it depends entirely on the works of its members. Unless everybody 'pulls together' to make Taizé work, the whole community could not operate as it does.

Well, has that made it any clearer? Does it sound the sort of experience that you would enjoy? You know, what makes Taizé really special is that you get from it what you put in. Every time I have gone it has been for different reasons, and every time I have come away having had a unique experience. My first visit, as an 18 year old, was in order to spend some time

reflecting on the beginning of a new era – I was about to start University. I was full of questions, and looking for answers. What did I really want from life? Now, ten years later, my fourth visit was for quite different reasons. I had just completed my training as a social worker, and as part of this training I had worked at Great Ormond Street Hospital in London. During my time there I had been with three children when they died. The memory of one mother, the same age as me, holding her dying toddler in her arms and sobbing 'Why?' may never leave me. This same question – Why? – had been haunting me. How could a loving, caring God let this happen – Why? Taizé did not provide the answers, but it did give me the space to think, to be on my own, to share with others, to shed some unshed tears, and to generally recharge some flagging batteries.

So you see, Taizé is different to different people. It is a place to be serious, and a place to have tremendous fun. Each one of our Toc H group will have got something unique from our week, and this article can only be a personal statement. The only way you can truly understand Taizé is to go there yourself – do you know, I reckon you'd really enjoy it! See you there!

POPERINGE THOUGHTS

Alan Johnson

**The Hayes
-75
Years Old**
Joyce Green

A visit to the Old House at Poperinge always has a profound effect on people. I was very moved indeed, though, when in response to a first visit, one young man discovered something other than war cemeteries or a 'good time'. At the end of the visit he wrote the following:

Dear God,
This is a short letter of introduction.
You know me very well; I do not know you.
You appreciate my sense of fun; I do not yours.
You respect my love (for people); I do not yours.
You show me the way to be fair; I do not watch.
You guide me on the road to peace; I do not follow.
You welcome me with open arms; I shake your hand only.
You give me the pleasure of happiness; I use it sparingly.
You talk to me always; I do not listen.
I hope with this letter we shall meet.
Yours,

Phil Walker.

PS. Shall we consult diaries and make it as soon as possible?

On his return from Poperinge, he talked with his friends and one wrote the following poems:

I saw a soldier in my mind,
By order he went up the line.
And though he knew he was to die
I never saw him once reply.
In my modern thoughts I see
A dim picture of history.
Maybe he thought just like me.
Apart by years but together we
Together we march through our lives,
I watch to see if he arrives.
Separate by different times
By order he went up the line.

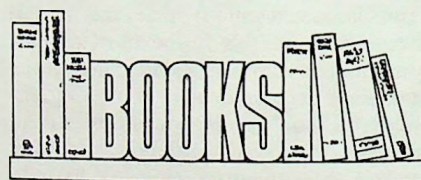
And maybe in the morning
I will see a little more,
And maybe it will help me to understand
Why a boy of my age
Goes to a foreign land
And maybe in the morning
He'll still be alive
And maybe he helped me to survive.
And maybe — maybe I should thank him
For the life he lost.
And maybe, oh maybe I should count his cost.
But I don't know why because it was so long ago
He slept for his King in the foreign snow.
But who am I to talk of a past that was his?
And did he ever feel a woman's kiss?
I feel a fighting edge running through my blood.
But I know it's wrong. I'd to that boy if I could.
And maybe he would tell me where I made my mistake.
And maybe he could help me — for peace's sake.

What he missed is what I enjoy
For he was a young soldier boy.

Ross Bancroft

The poems and the prayer-letter offer many points to ponder.

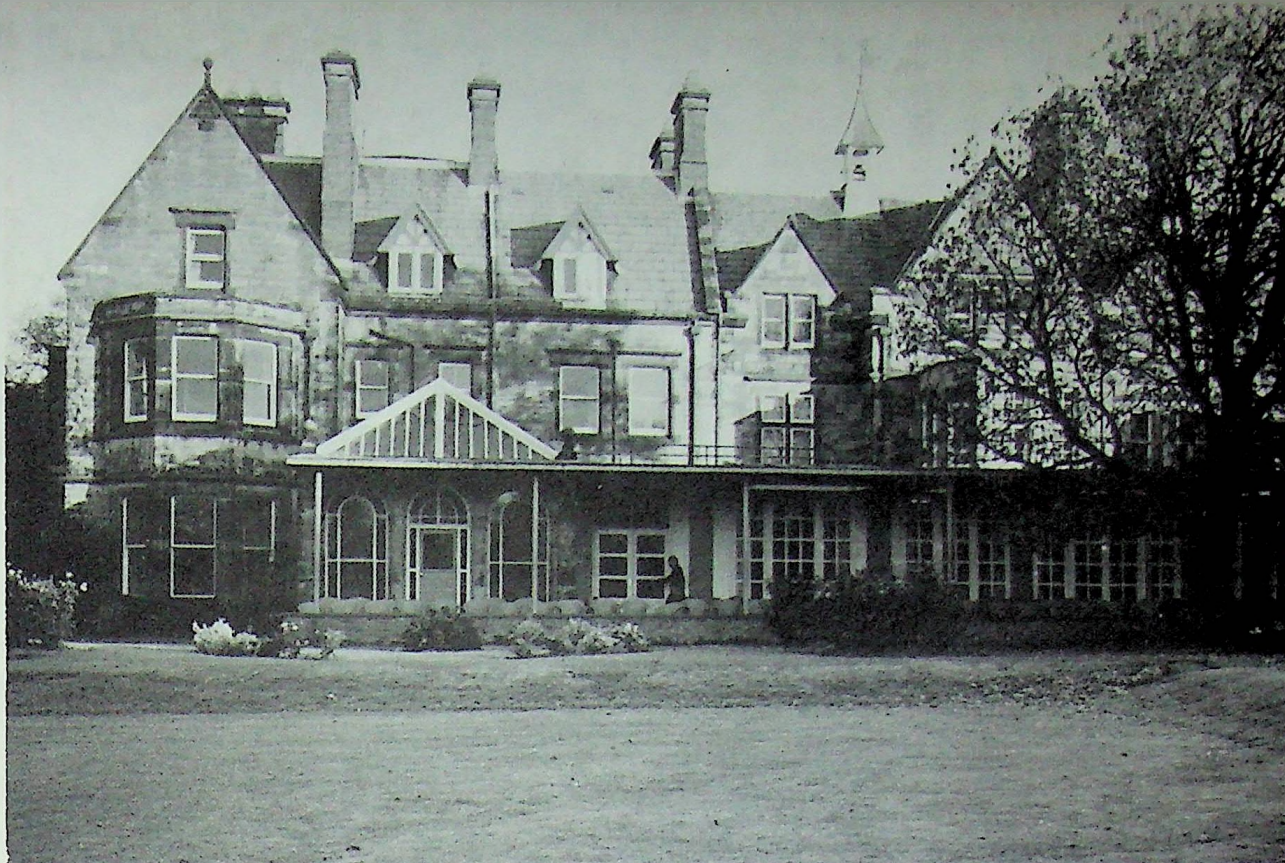
Since 1953 (see Central Council reports — 1954? 55? 56?) Central Councillors have journeyed to The Hayes Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire, in early Spring, or drear November, for the Movement's Annual Meetings. On 10 November, First Conference Estate PLC, who run both The Hayes and High Leigh, Hoddesdon, (since 1922) celebrated their 75th anniversary with a lunch and a Service of Thanksgiving at The Hayes, which was attended by representatives of many of the Churches and organisations who have used these Centres over the years. The Hayes was looking at its best on a bright November day, with beautiful flower arrangements on the well-filled buffet tables, as well as in every room, and there was an interesting exhibition of the history of the two Centres. The guests almost filled the Conference Hall for the Service of Thanksgiving, which was chaired by the Bishop of Derby and at which the Guest Speaker was the Revd Dr H Eric Fenn. At the close of the service we showed our appreciation of the work of the Staff at the two Centres, and were able to pay a specially warm tribute to Mr Wally Milne, whose friendly personality has permeated The Hayes for most of the years that Toc H has met there.



'The New Radical' by Jim Wallis
Published by Lion Paperback @ £1.95.

Jim Wallis was voted by Time Magazine as one of the 50 most influential new leaders in America today. He is a passionate American activist for peace, racial integration, the poor and civil rights. His message is a disturbing one although he finishes on the theme of revival, after Reagan.

The book is also a personal story of his own pilgrimage — from America's Evangelical heartland through the civil rights and anti-war movements of the 60s, and a crisis and recovery of a personal faith. He claims our times 'cry out for dramatic change in our relationship to our neighbour, to the



First Conference Estate Ltd purchased The Hayes and opened the Conference Centre in 1911. As the present Chairman, the Revd Alan Booth, writes in his Foreword to the anniversary brochure 'Swanwick was born at a special moment in Church History – when the radical enthusiasm of the modern missionary movement ran up against the scientific culture of the 20th century . . . old denominational barriers collapsed and became irrelevant as new issues emerged

to challenge Christian discipleship. So The Hayes – and later High Leigh too – became a sort of training camp for the whole modern ecumenical enterprise'.

Like all anniversaries it was a time of looking back with thanksgiving, and also looking forward to new opportunities. To quote sentences from Alan Booth again – 'We want to enlarge even further our role as a meeting place for Christians from different strata in the church – making

welcome Roman Catholic conferences, the conferences of some of the newly burgeoning evangelical movements in the churches, and to provide an effective welcome to the Afro-Caribbean churches throughout Britain'.

To attempt all this, the continuing up-dating of buildings, rooms and resources is the aim for the next 25 years. We wish them a happy 75th anniversary, and great things for the future.

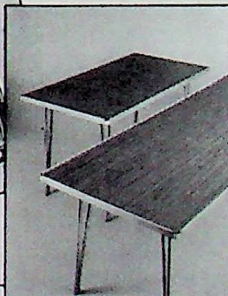
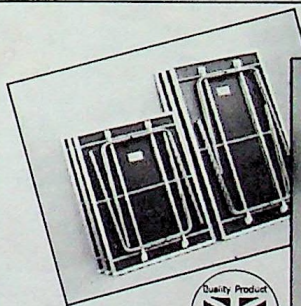
earth and to God'. His case against the American way of life is made out from a perspective of the poor whose cause he has championed for many years. He is committed to a ministry that serves to empower the poor, equipping them to speak out personally and publicly. He has jarring comments to make about racism in America and in particular in the police force, notably from experiences in Detroit and Washington. He has a burning conviction that the truth about a society is best known at the bottom amongst its victims. He has some very interesting observations to make on 'cheap grace . . . true grace, . . . saving grace, . . . and self images'.

This is a challenging, sometimes disturbing book which I speculate will become a classic of its kind.

I would recommend it particularly to Toc H field staff, job masters and project leaders.

Paul Rogoff

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The details of these projects are outlined in the 'Toc H projects' booklet which is available free, from:
Toc H Headquarters, (Project Booklet), 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT.
Telephone No: 0296 623911.

Small Ads

Small advertisements must be received (with remittance) five weeks before publication day, which is the 23rd of the preceding month. The charge is 5p a word (minimum 50p) plus VAT, to Point Three Magazine. Rates of display advertisements can be obtained from the Editorial Office, Toc H, 1 Forest Close, Wendover. Telephone: 0296 623911.

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